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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/050,864	01/18/2002	Yasushi Yamamoto	358.41077X00	9239
21254	7590	06/10/2004	EXAMINER	
MCGINN & GIBB, PLLC 8321 OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD SUITE 200 VIENNA, VA 22182-3817			KING, BRADLEY T	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
			3683	

DATE MAILED: 06/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/050,864	YASUSHI
	Examiner Bradley T King	Art Unit 3683

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2004.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 and 9-14 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 9, 10 and 13 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 11, 12 and 14 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 19842532.

DE 19842532 discloses all the limitations of the instant claims including; a shift lever 28, a select actuator 24 for operating said shift lever in a direction of selection, and a shift actuator 34 for operating said shift lever in a direction of shift, wherein said select actuator comprises a casing 38, a shift lever support member 44 disposed in said casing so as to slide in an axial direction while supporting said shift lever, magnetic moving means disposed on the outer periphery of said shift lever support member, a cylindrical fixed yoke surrounding said magnetic moving means, and a coil 46 disposed on the inside of said fixed yoke and select position limiting means 42 for limiting the operation position of the shift lever support member in accordance with thrust produced on the shift lever support member due to electric power supplied to the coil.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 9, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 19842532 in view of Lequesne (IEEE article).

DE 19842532 discloses a gear change device including; a shift lever 28, a select actuator 24 for operating said shift lever in a direction of selection, and a shift actuator 34 for operating said shift lever in a direction of shift, wherein said select actuator comprises a casing 38, a shift lever support member 44 disposed in said casing so as to slide in an axial direction while supporting said shift lever, magnetic moving means disposed on the outer periphery of said shift lever support member, a cylindrical fixed yoke surrounding said magnetic moving means, and a coil 46 disposed on the inside of said fixed yoke and said shift lever support member comprises a control shaft 44 rotatably disposed in said casing, and a cylindrical shift sleeve 18 disposed on said control shaft and able to slide in the axial direction and select position limiting means 42 for limiting the operation position of the shift lever support member in accordance with thrust produced on the shift lever support member due to electric power supplied to the coil. DE 19842532 lacks the explicit disclosure of a permanent magnet for the magnetic moving means. Permanent magnets in solenoid devices are well known in the art and further taught by Lesquesne. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the

art at the time the invention was made to utilize a permanent magnet in the actuator of DE 19842532 to maximize the speed and force of the actuator.

Double Patenting

Claim 10 is provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/171610. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the same subject matter is claimed through slightly different wording.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-12 and 14 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record fails to disclose select position limiting means that can position the shift lever support member to one of four distinct positions.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 3/31/2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The position limit means of DE 19842532 limit the position to a central position when the electric power applied to the coils is zero, and the springs further limit the displacement on either side. It is maintained the springs of DE 19842532 read upon the select position limiting means as broadly defined by the claims.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

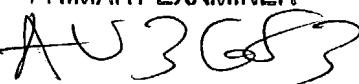
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bradley T King whose telephone number is (703) 308-8346. The examiner can normally be reached on 11:00-7:30 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Lavinder can be reached on (703) 308-3421. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

BTK


DOUGLAS C. BUTLER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
 6/8/04
AU3683